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Pancasila Values, Moral Integrity, and the Normalization of Academic Dishonesty: Evidence from Indonesian University Students

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Abstract

Growing evidence suggests that academic dishonesty is increasingly perceived as socially acceptable among university students. However, previous studies have primarily focused on psychological, institutional, and contextual determinants of academic dishonesty, while the combined role of national ideological values and knowledge decay remains underexplored. Driven by self-regulatory theory, which is an internal ideological standard guiding behavioral choices through moral judgment and effectively deterring academic misconduct, this study aims to investigate the impact of Pancasila as the national ideology values, mediated by moral integrity, on normalized academic dishonesty, while also considering the moderating role of the ideology course completion time as a proxy of the knowledge decay mechanism. The data were collected from 310 Indonesian students Employing a quantitative cross-sectional survey design, this study examined the proposed mediation-moderation model by utilizing the Hayes PROCESS Macro Model 4 and Model 1 protocols. The findings indicate that moral integrity significantly mediated the relationship between ideological values and normalized academic dishonesty. Moreover, conditional process analysis verifies that these pathways were considerably moderated by course completion time, showing that they were not immediately active upon course completion; instead, they emerged only as the time since instruction increased. These results extend Self-Regulatory Theory by showing how ideological values function as moral self-regulatory resources in weakening the normalization of academic dishonesty.

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INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity has become a growing concern at universities worldwide (Brickhill et al., 2025). Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) must transcend mere knowledge transfer, instilling the character, values, and moral grounding vital for the future (Sirca & Billen, 2024; Kokkinos & Antoniadou, 2024). One of the fundamental examples of academic integrity among students is academic dishonesty, individuals' or groups' acts of cheating in various forms of academic activities, such as unauthorized collaboration and taking advantage of others' work without proper permission (Ampuni et al., 2020).

Even in developed countries such as the US and EU, many undergraduate students admit to cheating on exams, misuse of AI, and report-writing (e.g., Ortiz-Bonnin & Blahopoulou, 2025; Reiter et al., 2025; Chirikov et al., 2026). In Indonesia, cases of jockeying in many forms of students' work—even in the admission process—have risen rapidly as real examples of an academic integrity breach within university students (e.g., Ampuni et al., 2020; Effendi et al., 2023). Such a phenomenon is exacerbated by the swift rise of artificial intelligence (AI), leading to a new term: AI-giarism, which is defined as an act of cheating that involves AI and plagiarism in HEIs' practices (Chan, 2025). Failure to address these issues may normalize a corruptive behavior among Indonesian students who are the potential leaders and policy-makers in the near future (Faridli et al., 2025; Taufika et al., 2025).

Extant studies investigate moral functioning as one of the fundamental predictors of academic dishonesty and integrity (e.g., Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004; Schlenker et al., 2008; Sirca & Billen, 2024; Kokkinos & Antoniadou, 2024). However, how a national ideology can build such a moral foundation, which is expected to mitigate academic dishonesty further, is relatively overlooked. Although Indonesia's national ideology has been thoroughly considered as a key factor inhibiting corrupt behavior (e.g., Effendi et al., 2023; Fernando et al., 2022; Franklin & Hägerdal, 2024; Muqsith et al., 2022), to date, existing literature has barely explored how this fundamental civic framework cultivates student moral integrity to prevent academic dishonesty.

Most conventional academic integrity frameworks rely on top-down moral absolutism to rigidly dictate behavioral standards, an administrative approach that inherently marginalizes student perspectives and voices in ethical assessments. However, such institutional rigidity is increasingly problematic amid contemporary technological shifts, as evidenced by the fractured consensus among faculty members who hold deeply conflicting views on the permissible boundaries and restrictions of generative AI in student coursework (e.g., McDonald, 2010; Brickhill et al., 2025; Chan, 2025).

Thus, according to ethical relativism—a paradigm that sees ethics or moral standards differ between individuals or groups from varied cultures, time settings, and circumstances (McDonald, 2010)—how students view the "right or wrong" dictated by faculty members and campus regulations, to some extent, may be irrelevant. Therefore, instead of using the traditional Likert scale of agreeing or disagreeing with following the academic integrity "dictated regulations," the current study prefers to use the "normal to not normal" continuum in assessing the academic dishonesty scale.

Led by these thoughts, by combining the foundational principles of normalization (Wolfensberger & Tullman, 1982) and ethical relativism (McDonald, 2010) with the concept of academic dishonesty (Ampuni et al., 2020), this study introduces normalized academic dishonesty (NAD), defined as a socio-psychological state in which behaviors traditionally classified as misconduct by institutional regulations are perceived as acceptable or normal practices by students. NAD differs from academic dishonesty by accounting for the dynamic adaptation of group moral standards to inclusive, cohort-specific frameworks (Volovchuk, 2024); therefore, it assesses not only active behavior but also a unique socio-psychological condition of perception and social approval. NAD is theoretically separate from moral disengagement. While moral disengagement is an active, individual psychological mechanism that rationalizes fraudulent conduct by temporarily bypassing internal moral standards (Farnese et al., 2011;

Kangwa et al., 2024), NAD captures a stabilized, collective shift. In this state, widespread peer influence and modern technological landscapes—such as generative AI—have structurally neutralized the deviant connotation of these infractions, causing students to perceive them as standard, acceptable practices (Bangkara, 2026; Lund et al., 2025).

By embedding the knowledge decay theory, which posits that cognitive recall diminishes over time (Dills et al., 2016; Swargiary, 2024), this study uses the Pancasila course completion time as a moderator. The underlying assumption is that students who completed the Pancasila course a long time before those in recent cohorts will exhibit diminished recall of Pancasila values.

To sum up, this study addresses the emerging issue of academic dishonesty, which threatens to institutionalize unethical conduct among future Indonesian leaders. Despite the established link between moral functioning and academic integrity, the role of national ideology values as a foundational deterrent, as well as the underinvestigated issue of knowledge decay, remains significantly overlooked. Thus, this research aims to investigate how Pancasila values may foster moral integrity to mitigate academic dishonesty, while addressing two major originalities: (a) extending academic integrity literature by interplaying SRT, ideological values, ethical relativism, and knowledge decay theories; (b) proposing a new construct of NAD.

Self-regulatory theory and academic dishonesty

The self-regulatory theory (SRT), underlying the interplay model of ideological values, moral integrity, and academic dishonesty in the current study, is a psychological concept that concerns the human ability to control thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. This theory has been developed and discussed in human behavior studies since the early 21st century, drawing on theorists like Albert Bandura (1991) and Baumeister and Heatherton (1996). Drawing on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), three primary domains of self-regulation are: self-monitoring of actions and their impacts, judging behavior against personal and social standards, and self-reaction. In the same vein, Baumeister and Heatherton (1996) identifies three essential domains of self-regulatory, i.e., clear standards (e.g., goals or ideals), effective monitoring (e.g., comparing the standards with current states or actions), and the operate phase (the strength or ability to override habitual re-sponses). In sum, both theorists view self-regulation as a triadic process in which individuals monitor and compare their thoughts, feelings, and actions against standards and adjust their behavior accordingly. In our structural framework, these triadic processes explain how macro-level ideological expectations are converted into internal constraints against behavioral misconduct.

In this study, the value or moral standard is represented by Pancasila, Indonesia's national ideology, which serves as the basis for morality and national direction (Wisnaeni & Herawati, 2020). Under the SRT framework, Pancasila values function specifically as the objective self-regulatory standards the baseline ideals described by Baumeister and Heatherton (1996) and the social standards mandated by Bandura (1991) against which students evaluate their academic conduct. According to Fernando et al. (2022), Pancasila is the crystallization of national and moral values, serving as a moral compass for all Indonesian laws and societies, including the prevention and eradication of corruptive behaviors. Any fraudulent misconducts, thus, potentially violate the principles and values of Pancasila, such as the first precept "Belief in one God" (moral and ethical values taught by God/religions); the second precept "Just and civilized humanity" (corruptive and cheating behaviors are considered an uncivilized action); and the fifth precept "Social justice for all Indonesian people" (corruptive and cheating behaviors may harm justice to other people) (Effendi et al., 2023). In Indonesia, Pancasila is a mandatory course in university curricula, mainly taught in the early semesters. As a transition pedagogy a guiding philosophy for intentional first-year curriculum design (Kift, 2015) Pancasila can serve as an early guiding principle to emphasize the importance of academic integrity to first-year students (Brickhill et al., 2025). Particularly in Indonesia, the Pancasila education is a part of students' character building (Adiyono et al., 2025; Nurdiansyah et al., 2025).

The implementation of SRT within the academic integrity or dishonesty literature consistently shows that integrity is a consequence of a self-regulatory mechanism that compares behavior with standard values (Acosta-Gonzaga & Ramirez-Arellano, 2021; Msafiri et al., 2023; Ranger et al., 2020). Internalizing positive value standards among students can enhance their academic integrity, thereby minimizing dishonesty (Brickhill et al., 2025; Löfström et al., 2015). However, the effect of these standards on academic integrity is often indirect. Drawing on Bandura's (2002) framework, moral integrity represents the vital internalization mechanism within this loop. It serves as the psychological engine of the self-judgment and self-reaction subfunctions, translating external ideological standards into active internal boundaries. A higher level of self-regulation can internalize moral standards effectively into actions that pre-emptively deter academic misconduct (Suralaga et al., 2021). In such cases, moral integrity can be a significant predictor of academic integrity (Ampuni et al., 2020; Martin et al., 2009). Conversely, lower self-regulation often results in moral disengagement or disintegrity, a state in which individuals may rationalize fraudulent conduct by bypassing moral standards (Farnese et al., 2011; Kangwa et al., 2024). Consequently, when moral integrity functions effectively as an active internalization mechanism, it increases students' capacity to override rationalizations, thereby reducing normalized academic dishonesty.

Thus, based on the SRT framework, value standards may exert both direct and indirect impacts on academic dishonesty, with the latter potentially being significant and mediated by moral integrity. Led by these thoughts, we hypothesize:

H1 Pancasila values significantly enhance students' moral integrity.
H2 Pancasila values are significantly associated with reduced students' normalized academic dishonesty.
H3 Moral integrity significantly influences students' normalized academic dishonesty.
H4 Moral integrity mediates the effect of Pancasila values on students' normal-ized academic dishonesty.

Moderation effect of knowledge decay

As abovementioned, Pancasila is a mandatory course taught in early semesters. However, these instilled values are challenged by the phenomenon of knowledge decay. Drawing on the competence retention framework (Vlasblom et al., 2020), the internalization of Pancasila values can be susceptible to temporal erosion, with cognitive recall and the depth of understanding fading as the temporal gap from the initial instruction increases. According to Swargiary (2024), knowledge retention often declines shortly after course completion, with standardized test scores potentially dropping by nearly 30% within a three-month hiatus (Swargiary, 2024). This learning loss is further exacerbated in sequential or longitudinal learning environments, where a prolonged hiatus between early-semester instruction and later academic challenges can lead to substantial decay in foundational principles/values (Dills et al., 2016).

As a result, since Indonesia's higher education curriculum confines national ideology education to an early, isolated semester without longitudinal reinforcement, students' moral and ideological values instilled through the Pancasila course may diminish over time. It thus necessitates using course completion time as a moderator, as elapsed time reliably predicts cognitive erosion, as unreinforced moral frameworks naturally decay (Dills et al., 2016; Swargiary, 2024; Vlasblom et al., 2020).

While extant academic integrity studies within the SRT framework are often moderated by factors such as learning environments (Carter Jr et al., 2020), self-doubt and efficacy (Broadbent & Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, 2018; Stephen et al., 2020), learning climate (Ninković et al., 2023), and social support (Stephen et al., 2020), the course completion time gap has barely been tested as a moderator within the model. This leads to a further essential research question:

RQ How can the Pancasila course completion time gap moderate the effect of Pancasila values (a) and moral integrity (b) on students' academic dishonesty?

The hypotheses and research questions can be illustrated in Figure 1.

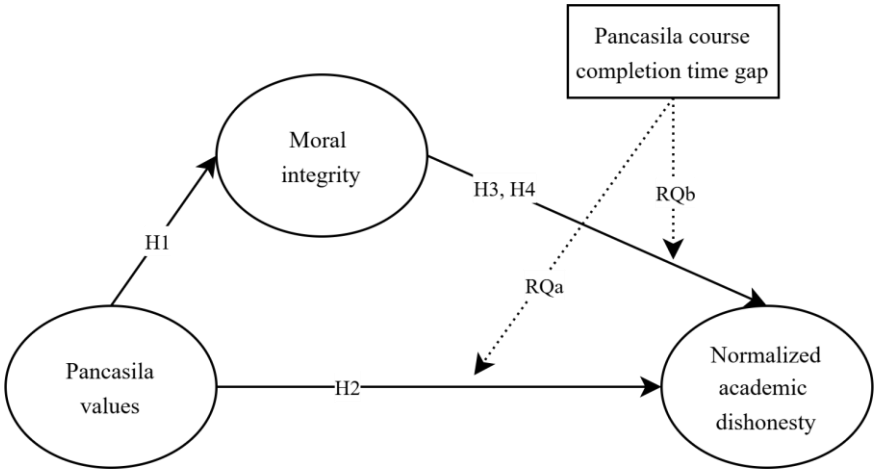


Figure 1. Research model

METHOD

Samples

Using purposive sampling, the sample included active students who had completed the Pancasila course and were at least 18 years old at the time of the survey. Samples were invited via WhatsApp course groups at several major universities in Riau Province, Indonesia, and the candidates were encouraged to share the online questionnaire link with their colleagues. The link remained open from 15 January until 31 January 2026. Within the period, 435 candidates responded, of which 310 completed and valid surveys, yielding a completion rate of 71.3%. A G*Power analysis (linear regression, fixed model, f^2=.15, α=.05, power=.95, three predictors) indicated a minimum required sample of 119; thus, N=310 substantially exceeded this, satisfying Hayes' PROCESS bootstrapping and mediation-moderation power recommendations. Further, Harman's single-factor test revealed that the first factor accounted for 37.6% of the variance, below the 50% threshold (Podsakoff et al., 2024), suggesting that common method bias was not a significant concern.

Due to the minimal-risk nature of this study, which involved anonymous, voluntary participation without vulnerable populations, deception, or the collection of sensitive personal data, formal Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was not required, in accordance with standard exemption criteria for low-risk survey-based educational research. Nonetheless, the study strictly complied with the fundamental ethical standards established in the Declaration of Helsinki. All samples provided informed consent before completing the study, ensuring they were aware of the research purpose and procedure, their voluntary participation, and the confidentiality of their responses.

As shown in Table 1, of the 310 responses, 60% were female students with an average age of 20.3 years old. Notably, 58.4% of students demonstrated high instructional recency, having completed the Pancasila course within the last year. Additionally, their academic performance was exceptional, with 86.4% of the cohort achieving an "A" grade in the subject.

Measurement

The independent variable was the Pancasila values. Unlike previous studies' methods, which used a subjective Likert scale, this study measured Pancasila values through an objective performance-based quiz. Adapted from the Pancasila Education Center's official "Pancasila Module" of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia (2015), the instrument featured five "True (1)/False (2)" items targeting the core principles of Pancasila. Each correct response was assigned a weight of 20%, yielding a 5-point weighted

scale: 1 (20% correct), 2 (40% correct), 3 (60% correct), 4 (80% correct), and 5 (100% correct). This transformation converted the categorical item-level responses into an interval-level composite score reflecting the proportion of Pancasila principles correctly identified by each respondent, consistent with standard practice for summed scores derived from dichotomous test items (Crocker & Algina, 2008).

Table 1. Samples' characteristics (N = 310)

Aspects			**Freq.**	**%**
Gender				
Male			124	40.0
Female			129	60.0
Age	**Min.**	**Max.**		**Mean**
	18	27		20.34
Pancasila course completion time				
Less than a year ago			181	58.4
More than a year ago			129	41.6
Pancasila course grade				
A			268	86.4
B			38	12.3
C			4	1.3

Reliability of the dichotomous, performance-based Pancasila knowledge quiz was evaluated using the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20), which yielded good internal consistency (Cronbach's α = .736). Notably, this performance-based approach was intentionally chosen to isolate the cognitive availability of ideological standards the foundational 'clear standards' component of self-regulation (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996) as distinct from their internalization. Within our model, moral integrity serves as a separate mechanism through which this knowledge is converted into an internalized, action-guiding commitment, consistent with Bandura's (1991, 2002) self-regulatory subfunctions of judgment and reaction.

This study used moral integrity a commitment to uphold moral principles (Ampuni et al., 2020) as the mediator. The scale was modified from the five-item moral foundation by Ampuni et al. (2020). Participants were asked to rate statements such as "Cheating may harm others" on a scale from 5 (very sure) to 1 (not sure). The scale demonstrated high reliability (α = .965), and each of its subscales showed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .70 or higher.

The dependent variable was normalized academic dishonesty. To date, academic integrity has been primarily viewed through the lens of moral absolutism, in which standards of "right or wrong" are rigidly dictated by institutions through top-down mechanisms (McDonald, 2010). Nevertheless, modern ethical systems should balance universal principles with cultural and cohort sensitivity and flexibility (Volovchuk, 2024). Therefore, instead of using the common definition of academic dishonesty, this study introduces 'Normalized Academic Dishonesty' to capture the cultural shift where academic misconduct is perceived as socially acceptable or 'normal' within the contemporary student psyche (Volovchuk, 2024; Wolfensberger & Tullman, 1982). This is not simply a superficial alteration in answer labeling; it reflects a fundamental transformation in the metrics being measured. Agreement or disagreement indicates an individual's personal moral position, while normality or non-normality pertains to a perceived descriptive social standard. According to Cialdini et al.'s (1991) focus theory of normative conduct, students may privately dissent over the acceptability of utilizing AI for assignments, yet nonetheless acknowledge it as 'normal' due to its prevalence as a socially unremarkable practice among peers. The scale was developed based on Lund's (2025) five-item academic dishonesty scale. Participants were asked to rate statements such as "Completing academic assignments by using AI" on a scale from 1 (very normal) to 5 (not normal). The scale demonstrated high reliability (α = .819), and

each of its subscales showed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .70 or higher.

To provide additional evidence of construct validity, Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted for each continuous construct (moral integrity and NAD). As shown in Table 2, all five items of Moral Integrity loaded strongly onto a single factor (.887 – .954), well above the .70 threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2019). The eigenvalue (4.423) far exceeds 1.0, and KMO = .815 indicates meritorious sampling adequacy. Reliability was excellent (α = .965). All five items of NAD loaded adequately (.700 – .939), meeting the minimum .70 benchmark. The eigenvalue (2.961) exceeds 1.0, and KMO = .878 indicates meritorious sampling adequacy. Reliability was strong (α = .819).

Finally, the Pancasila course completion time was the moderator, measured as a categorical response: less than a year ago (coded 1) and more than a year ago (coded 2).

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Continous constructs	Loadings	α	Eigenvalues	KMO
Moral Integrity (MI)		.965	4.423	.815
MI1	.943			
MI2	.954			
MI3	.943			
MI4	.887			
MI5	.898			
Normalized Academic Dishonesty (NAD)		.819	2.961	.878
NAD1	.700			
NAD2	.939			
NAD3	.782			
NAD4	.724			
NAD5	.749			

Data analysis

This study employed a cross-sectional quantitative survey design. To provide a comprehensive overview of the sample data, descriptive statistics—including the mean, standard deviation (SD), minimum, and maximum values—were calculated for all continuous variables. Further, this study used a parametric approach, in which the data were previously confirmed to meet assumptions such as normality, multicollinearity, linearity, and autocorrelation. Hypotheses H1 to H4 were then tested using the Hayes PROCESS model 4 (direct-mediation), while RQa and RQb were analyzed by employing the Hayes PROCESS model 1 (moderation) mechanism. Indirect effects were assessed by 5,000 bootstrap resamples, employing bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals to ascertain significance (effects considered significant if the interval excluded zero). All hypothesis tests employed a significance level of α = 0.05. In addition, effect sizes (Cohen's f^2) were computed for each pathway to complement significance testing (Cohen, 1988).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive results

Table 3 shows that, of the scale of five, how respondents recalled Pancasila values was somewhat high (M = 3.64; SD = .78). Those who completed Pancasila course less than a year ago (M = 3.73; SD = .79) demonstrated a significantly higher proficiency of Pancasila values (t = 2.68; p = .01***) than those who completed the course within more than a year ago (M = 3.50; SD = .75).

In general, the majority students showed a high moral integrity (M = 4.04; SD = .94). Those who completed Pancasila course less than a year ago (M = 4.30; SD =

.86) demonstrated a significantly stronger moral integrity (t = 6.28; p = .00***) than those who completed the course within more than a year ago (M = 3.66; SD = .92).

Similarly, of the scale of five, how respondents normalized the academic dishonesty was relatively moderate to low (M = 2.89; SD = .62). Students who completed Pancasila course less than a year ago (M = 3.31; SD = .35) normalized the academic dishonesty significantly lower (t = 24.05; p = .00***) than those who completed the course within more than a year ago (M = 2.30; SD = .39).

Direct and indirect effects

Before testing the hypotheses, all regression assumptions were initially verified: normality (p = .094); linearity (Rainbow test, p = .616); multicollinearity (VIF < 1.5, tolerance > .70), and autocorrelation (d = 1.75). Outlier diagnostics indicated no influential cases (Cook's D < 1; no Mahalanobis outliers, p < .001).

Table 4 demonstrates the direct and indirect effects of Pancasila values, mediated by moral integrity, on normalized academic dishonesty.

Table 3. Descriptive Results

Constructs	N	M	SD	t	p
Pancasila values	310	3.64	.78	2.68	.01***
PCT < 1 year	181	3.73	.79		
PCT > 1 year	129	3.50	.75		
Moral integrity	310	4.04	.94	6.28	.00***
PCT < 1 year	181	4.30	.86		
PCT > 1 year	129	3.66	.92		
Normalized academic dishonesty	310	2.89	.62	24.05	.00***
PCT < 1 year	181	3.31	.35		
PCT > 1 year	129	2.30	.39		

All Levene's tests > .05 (equal variances assumed)
*** $p \leq .01$

Table 4. Direct and indirect effects

Model	β	SE	t	p	f^2	[a]CI	
						LL	UL
PV → MI	.65	.06	11.24	.00***	.41	.54	.76
Male	.45	.10	-	-	-	-	-
Female	.59	.07	-	-	-	-	-
GD → MI	.12	.09	1.26	.21	.00	-.06	.30
PV → NAD	-.04	.05	-.88	.38	.00	-.14	.05
Male	.07	.09	-	-	-	-	-
Female	.21	.05	-	-	-	-	-
GD → NAD	.14	.07	2.04	.04**	.01	.01	.27
MI → NAD	.25	.04	6.12	.00***	.12	.17	.34
Male	.42	.06	-	-	-	-	-
Female	.31	.04	-	-	-	-	-
PV → MI → NAD	[b].17	[c].03	-	-	-	[d].11	[e].22

PV: Pancasila values; MI: moral integrity; NAD: normalized academic dishoesty; GD: gender
*** $p \leq .01$; ** $p \leq .05$
[a] LLCI | ULCI; at the 95% of CI, the range between LLCI and ULCI must not include zero (both must exhibit either a positive or negative slope) in order to be considered significant.
[b] Effect
[c] BootSE
[d] BootLLCI
[e] BootULCI

Pancasila values positively and significantly influenced moral integrity (β = .65; SE = .06; t = 11.24; p = .00***) and exerted a large effect (f^2 = 0.41), which, thus,

supporting H1. The coefficient for the significant predictor was in the expected direction: higher Pancasila values were associated with stronger moral integrity, even after statistically controlling for gender. Gender itself did not significantly predict moral integrity (β = .12; SE = .09; t = 1.26; p = .21; 95% CI [-.06, .30]), with a negligible effect size (f^2 = .00), indicating that respondents' gender did not confound the relationship between Pancasila values and moral integrity.

Contrarily, in the direct pathway, Pancasila values did not significantly decrease normalized academic dishonesty (β = -.04; SE = .05; t = -.88; p = .38), with a negligible/very small effect size (f^2 = .00), which rejected H2. Yet, when controlling for gender, gender itself emerged as a significant predictor of normalized academic dishonesty (β = .14; SE = .07; t = 2.04; p = .04**; f^2 = .01; 95% CI [.01, .27]), suggesting that, unlike Pancasila values, gender was independently associated with how normalized they perceived academic dishonesty to be, even though its effect size was small. In such a case, females' Pancasila values (β = .21; SE = .05) decreased NAD more strongly than the males (β = .07; SE = .09).

Moral integrity, on the other hand, positively and significantly impacted normalized academic dishonesty (β = .25; SE = .04; t = 6.12; p = .00***), with a small effect size (f^2 = .12), confirming H3. This coefficient for the significant predictor fell in the hypothesized direction: stronger moral integrity was associated with lower normalized academic dishonesty. This effect held even after controlling for gender, which was also a significant, albeit weaker, predictor of normalized academic dishonesty within the same model (β = .14; SE = .07; t = 2.04; p = .04**; f^2 = .01; 95% CI [.01, .27]). Male respondents demonstrated a stronger effect of moral integrity on NAD (β = .42; SE = .06) than females (β = .31; SE = .04), indicating that the effect of moral integrity on reducing NAD was more robust for male students than for female students.

The indirect coefficient (Effect = .17; BootSE = .03; 95% Boot CI [.11, .22]) was significant, as the bootstrap confidence interval did not include zero, indicating that moral integrity mediates the relationship between Pancasila values and normalized academic dishonesty. Given that the direct effect was not significant (β = -.04; SE = .05; t = -.88; p = .38), and the indirect effect was significant, according to Zhao et al.'s (2010) contemporary mediation typology, the result is classified as indirect-only mediation. It indicates that Pancasila values can only decrease NAD after the moral integrity increases.

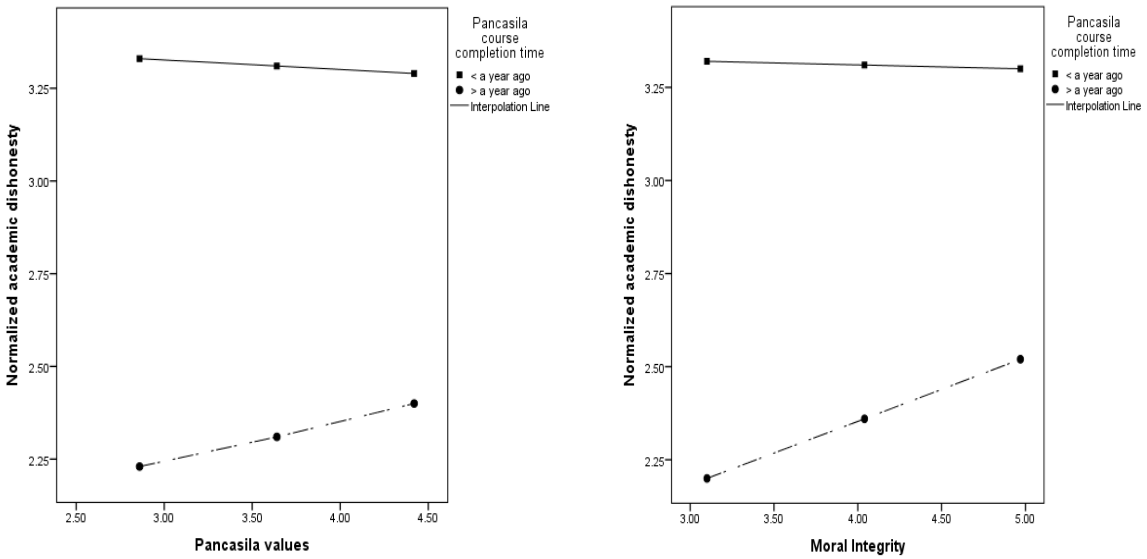
Figure 5 shows that the time gap in completing the Pancasila course moderated the effect of Pancasila values on normalized academic dishonesty (β = .13; SE = .05; t = 2.40; p = .02**) with a small effect size (f^2 = .02). Here, such a moderated effect was negative and insignificant (Effect = -.02; SE = .03; t = -.70; p = .48) on students who completed the course within the past year. This result indicates that instructional recency alone does not guarantee immediate behavioral efficacy. On the other hand, the moderated effect was positive and significant on those who completed the course a longer before (Effect = .11; SE = .04; t = 2.51; p = .01***). It suggests that respondents further removed in time from Pancasila instruction exhibited a meaningful relationship between their Pancasila values and reduced NAD.

Similarly, the time gap in completing the Pancasila course positively and significantly moderated the effect of moral integrity on normalized academic dishonesty (β = .18; SE = .05; t = 3.86; p = .00***) with a small effect size (f^2 = .05). The moderated effect was negative and insignificant (Effect = -.01; SE = .03; t = -.35; p = .72) on students who completed the course within the past year, while it was positive and significant on those who completed the course in more than a year ago (Effect = .17; SE = .03; t = 4.88; p = .00***). Both results indicate that moral integrity requires a temporal window before its influence on NAD can be reduced.

Discussion

The primary aim of this study is to determine how Pancasila values, as a national ideology, can foster moral integrity to reduce the normalization of academic dishonesty. By synthesizing Bandura's (1991) and Baumeister's (1996) triadic SRT processes—monitoring, judging, and reacting—Pancasila values may function as an objective cognitive

standard against which they can potentially evaluate their academic conduct.



Model	*β*	*SE*	*t*	*p*	f^2
PV*PCT → NAD	.13	.05	2.40	.02**	.02
PCT < 1 year	[a]-.02	.03	-.70	.48	-
PCT > 1 year	[a].11	.04	2.51	.01***	-
MI*PCT → NAD	.18	.05	3.86	.00***	.05
PCT < 1 year	-.01	.03	-.35	.72	-
PCT > 1 year	.17	.03	4.88	.00***	-

PV: Pancasila values; MI: moral integrity; NAD: normalized academic dishoesty; PCT: Pancasila course completion time
***p ≤ .01; **p ≤ .05
[a] Effect

Figure 1. Moderation effects

Empirically, Pancasila values significantly predicted moral integrity. Theoretically, this association is consistent with—though does not directly confirm—Bandura's (1991) self-reaction subfunction, suggesting Pancasila values may function as one input into students' self-reactive processes. It thus aligns with Fernando et al. (2022), who suggest that respect for moral values is reflected in Pancasila values. As crystallizations of national ideology, such values transform abstract ideologies into internal moral foundations.

A specifically interesting finding of this study is the absence of a direct reductive effect of Pancasila values on normalized academic dishonesty. This finding is thus irrelevant to previous findings suggesting that positive value standards among students can enhance their academic integrity, thereby minimizing dishonesty (Brickhill et al., 2025; Löfström et al., 2015). Instead, this study indicates that the effect of Pancasila values on NAD may operate primarily through moral integrity rather than through a detectable direct pathway.

Moral integrity, *per se*, significantly reduced NAD, which thus aligns with the broader SRT literature (e.g., Ampuni et al., 2020; Brickhill et al., 2025; Löfström et al., 2015; Suralaga et al., 2021), suggesting a similar frame of moral integrity as a reductive, protective mechanism against misconduct. This convergence reinforces moral integrity's established role as the internalization mechanism through which abstract ideological standards are converted into concrete behavioral restraint (Bandura, 2002).

Concerning the moderation findings, the gap in Pancasila course completion time significantly moderated both the Pancasila values–NAD and the moral integrity–NAD pathways. However, the pattern of this moderation runs counter to the

straightforward erosion narrative typically associated with knowledge decay theory (Dills et al., 2016; Swargiary, 2024; Vlasblom et al., 2020), which would predict a strong Pancasila values/moral integrity–NAD pathway immediately post-instruction that weakens as memory fades. Instead, the simple slopes were flat and nonsignificant for respondents who finished the course within the past year, but became significant for those who completed it over a year ago.

One possible theoretical explanation can refer to Hardy and Carlo's (2011) moral identity and value internalization theory, suggesting that translating abstract ideological knowledge into a functioning behavioral standard is not instantaneous but requires a period of cognitive and social consolidation, during which values are tested, reflected upon, and integrated into a stable self-concept. Under this account, the moderation pattern suggests that Pancasila values and moral integrity require time to mature into an operative self-regulatory standard—rather than functioning immediately upon acquisition and rather than eroding monotonically thereafter, as classical knowledge-decay models would predict. In other words, instructional recency alone may not guarantee immediate behavioral efficacy of ideological standards.

This study's findings provide several theoretical contributions. First, this study's particular finding offers a robust theoretical contribution by identifying Pancasila values as a culturally specific moral standard within the SRT framework. It posits that ideological literacy may serve as a critical cognitive benchmark for the judgment subfunction of the moral self-regulatory loop (Bandura, 1991, 2002).

Second, this study's mediation pattern offers empirical evidence for the functional distinctiveness of SRT's cognitive and internalization subfunctions. Rather than empirical, this divergence is mainly theoretical. Baumeister and Heatherton (1996) and Bandura (1991, 2002) defined self-regulation as a multi-stage process; yet, previous research on academic dishonesty has regarded ideological knowledge and its behavioral manifestation as a singular construct (e.g., Ampuni et al., 2020; Suralaga et al., 2021). By operationalizing Pancasila values as cognitive availability rather than attitude, this study isolated the clear standards subfunction from judgment/self-reaction, operationalized as moral integrity. The resulting indirect-only mediation pattern (Zhao et al., 2010) indicates that ideological knowledge by itself does not diminish normalization. Instead, it must first be internalized, providing empirical support for the view that cognitive availability is necessary but not sufficient for regulatory function (Bandura, 2002).

Third, the findings contribute to the body of knowledge by integrating the SRT framework with knowledge decay theory to reveal the temporal complexity—rather than simple erosion—of ethical and moral standards within an academic setting. This temporal contingency extends the ethical relativism perspective introduced earlier (McDonald, 2010), which posits that moral standards vary not only across individuals and cultures but also across time settings. While ethical relativism has typically been invoked to explain cross-sectional or cross-cultural variation in how misconduct is perceived, the present moderation findings suggest that the same standard—Pancasila values—can itself be relativized within a single population purely as a function of temporal distance from instruction. It shows that the "normal versus not normal" boundary central to this study's NAD construct is not a fixed property of the value system itself, but a boundary that shifts as students' relationship to that system evolves. As such, ethical relativism operates not only between groups but within a single cohort's own moral trajectory. This synthesis shifts the academic integrity paradigm from a static moral state to a dynamic, time-sensitive process requiring continuous reinforcement, and it identifies the temporal dynamics of value internalization—rather than mere retention loss.

From the practical perspectives, higher education administrators, faculty, and policymakers must transition from a static, top-down approach to a dynamic, iterative model of moral reinforcement. Given that instructional recency alone does not appear sufficient to activate the deterrent function of Pancasila values, teaching national ideologies like Pancasila as a one-off, early-semester mandate is unlikely to maintain long-term integrity on its own; instead, HEIs should implement spaced-reinforcement strategies

that integrate these moral standards across the curriculum—for example, by offering anti-corruption and ethics courses at later points in students' academic trajectories, when values may be more behaviorally consolidated. In addition, since moral integrity acts as the critical mediating mechanism through which ideological values reduce normalized dishonesty, faculty members should facilitate student voice dialogues that address the friction between institutional rules and the realities of generative AI and peer collaboration—technologies and practices that prior literature suggests may be reshaping how students perceive the boundaries of acceptable academic conduct (e.g., Bangkara, 2026; Laflamme & Bruneault, 2025; Lund et al., 2025), though this specific mechanism was not directly measured in the present study. Concurrently, policymakers should move beyond punitive measures and focus on cultivating ideological literacy that evolves with technological shifts, ensuring that moral standards remain internalized anchors rather than perceived as obsolete regulations.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study provides novel evidence that Pancasila values reduce normalized academic dishonesty only indirectly, through moral integrity, rather than through a direct ideological effect—empirically demonstrating a cognitive–internalization separation within Self-Regulatory Theory. Furthermore, this deterrent mechanism does not become operational immediately upon completion of the course. Instead, it emerges only as the time since instruction increases, a pattern that departs from conventional knowledge-decay predictions and instead points to a delayed-consolidation process in value internalization—a temporal dimension of ethical relativism largely unexamined in prior literature. Collectively, these results generate a mechanism- and time-sensitive explanation of how ideological values influence moral self-regulation.

Despite its contributions, this study also has a few limitations. First, the research surveyed 310 students specifically from universities in Riau province, Indonesia. It may hinder the generalizability of the findings to the broader, highly diverse Indonesian archipelago, or even across nations. Future studies are encouraged to expand the study's geographical and population scope, for instance, by considering how variations in regional educational standards and local cultural norms across provinces or nations might influence the internalization of ideological values and the normalization of academic dishonesty.

Second, the research design was cross-sectional. This means, it merely captures snapshots of different cohorts at a single point in time rather than tracking the same individuals over several years. Thus, a longitudinal study would provide more robust evidence of how an individual student's recall of ideological values and moral integrity actually degrades over time.

Third, this study operationalized Pancasila values using a performance-based knowledge quiz, measuring cognitive memory rather than emotional endorsement. While aligned with the clear standards component of self-regulatory theory (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996), knowledge and internalization remain conceptually distinct. Subsequent research should correlate performance-based metrics with attitudinal or implicit indicators of ideological commitment.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Devra: Conceptualization, writing original draft. Writing review and editing, data curation. **Suci**: Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Validation. **Farwitawati:** Visualization, Project administration, Resources, Data curation.

Declaration of competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Declaration of the use of AI

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